

ALRGRAM

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11-10-62

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A-693

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HANDLING INDICATOR

TO : DEPARTMENT OF STATE

INFO: ANKARA, PARIS

FROM : Amembassy ROME

DATE: November 10 1962

SUBJECT: Italian Communists Revive Anti-Missile Campaign

REF :

PARIS FOR USRO.

After a week or so of apparent confusion following President Kennedy's October 22 speech, the Italian Communist (PCI) press began in early November echoing suggestions already made elsewhere to the effect that removal of Soviet missiles in Cuba should be coupled with elimination of foreign military bases generally, and specifically with removal of NATO missiles from Italy--a periodically publicized PCI objective.

The Communist organ l'Unita' set the tone with its front-page editorial on Monday, November 1, calling for "the prohibition of atomic and thermo-nuclear weapons and initiation of the liquidation of foreign military bases throughout the world." On page 3, under 5-column headlines declaring "PCI, PSI (and) DC at Matera against the USA bases in Italy," the paper reported resolutions of the Provincial Council of Matera (in the Bari-Taranto area) and the Communal Council of Piombino (Livorno Province) calling for disarmament and elimination of foreign bases, and summarized a speech in Bologna by CGIL Assistant Secretary General On.le Fernando SANTI in which he demanded the dismantling of U.S. missile bases.

During the following week, the question of the missile bases was raised several times in l'Unita''s letters column, and once in passing in its lead editorial. Then, on November 6, the PCI organ printed on page 1 a "noble peace appeal from the Italian cultural community" under the headline, "Remove the missiles from Italy." The appeal, along fairly standard neutralist lines, asks the Italian Government to "take steps, with a free initiative serving as an example for all, so that the terrible peril deriving, for us and for others, from the useless presence of missiles on the national territory be definitively removed from Italy" and to

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Contents and Classification Approved by:

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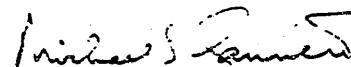
"proclaim solemnly as of now that Italy will always remain extraneous to an atomic conflict, however or for whatever reason begun."

The dozen signatures printed below the appeal when first published included, along with those of well-known philo-communist intellectuals and petition-signers such as painter Renato GUTTUSO, poet Salvatore QUASIMODO, and writers Carlo LEVI and Alberto MORAVIA, the names of sculptor Giacomo MANZU, who designed the commemorative medal for the Ecumenical Council, and Socialist university professors Cesare MUSATTI and Carlo ARNAUDI. (The last-named is a member of the center-left Communal Council of Milan.) An additional list of 69 subsequent signatories published in the Communist press on November 8, although headed "Intellectuals of every tendency urge an autonomous initiative by the government," contained few names of any prominence, and those signers known to the Embassy are all Communists or fellow-travellers (the Mario MISSIROLI listed as having signed should not be confused with the prominent conservative newspaperman, now with the Rome Messagero,).

Comment:

Although international events may turn out to give the current campaign a certain impetus which was absent from previous similar ventures, it is worth noting that, on the several occasions the PCI has tried to launch an anti-missile campaign in Italy, the campaign has collapsed in the face of widespread indifference. In all probability, support for this new appeal will remain largely limited to the chronic appeal-signers, devastatingly characterized by Demochristian (DC) Vice-Secretary G.B. SCAGLIA in the DC weekly Discussione as "intellectual call-girls," associated in past years with such mendacious nonsense as the anti-germ-warfare campaign during the Korean War. However, one can not exclude the possibility that the anti-missile campaign will be carried into Parliament, with the aim of embarrassing the Government on the eve of a national election campaign and forcing the Socialist Party to choose between its traditional neutralism and its support for the center-left regime.

FOR THE AMBASSADOR:



Michael R. Gahnett, Chief
Mutual Defense Affairs Section

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